1:Srinivas E-5 (1940-42)1952 AW5 Coorg AW5

776 782 184 hand, cobra-worship has a different orientation. In each village or locality, a platform is built round a peepul-tree (*ficus religiosa*) and on this platform are kept sculptured images of single snakes, or of two intertwined snakes. Such a platform is worshipped by all the people in the locality.

Cobra-worship among Coorgs has the same orientation it has in Malabar but for one important difference: in Malabar the deity Subramaṇya does not seem to be connected with cobras, whereas everywhere else in south India cobras are identified with Subra-
[778] maṇya, the second son of Shiva. Shrines dedicated to Subramaṇya, some of them well-known centres of pilgrimage, are commonly found in south India.

776 779 177 The identification of cobras with Subramaṇya demonstrates the way in which Sanskritic Hinduism operates. The worship of cobras is very popular among all Hindus, and the identification of cobras with Subramaṇya provides a door for the entry of Sanskritic Hinduism. People who until then had only been worshipping cobras came to know about Subramaṇya, the son of Shiva. They also learn of the story of Subramaṇya's birth, which is a tiny slice of Hindu mythology; and of Shiva, his relation to other gods like Vishṇu and Brahma, and so on. Pilgrimages to shrines dedicated to Subramaṇya became popular, and these shrines again are a source for the further spread of Sanskritic Hinduism. There are usually myths about these shrines and each such myth tells the pilgrim a little more about Sanskritic Hinduism.

776 778 Stones representing Pūda and Guḷika are frequently found in the compound of a Coorg's house. Pūda is the Tamil corruption of the Sanskritic *bhūta*, which means a spirit. Pūda is frequently one of the deities in a village temple.

Guḷika in the Tamil country is the name of one of the eight serpents supporting the earth in Hindu mythology. In Malabar and Coorg, however, he is better known as the son of Saturn. He is also referred to as Māndi.

[761] [781] [789] Guḷika is associated with death: a man is supposed to see Guḷika just before dying. Horoscopes drawn up in Malabar and Coorg show the position of Guḷika, and this is said to indicate when the native is going to die. When a number of deaths take place in a Coorg's house it is customary to plant a stone called Mṛityu Guḷika (death Guḷika). This is believed to put an end to the deaths.

1:Srinivas E-5 (1940-42)1952 AW5 Coorg AW5

offered every day, in others once a week, while still others come to life only annually or once every few years, when the festival of the deity is being celebrated. Such a festival usually lasts several days and culminates in the sacrifice of fowl, sheep, goats, and buffaloes. Devotees walk barefoot across fire, gash themselves with swords, and so on, on the last day of the festival.

While the priests at the Sanskritic temples are usually[1] Brahmins, men belonging to one of the non-Brahmin castes are frequently priests at the temples dedicated to village-deities. Here again practice varies from region to region, village to village, and temple to temple. For instance, in Coorg, Brahmins from South Canara are commonly priests at temples dedicated to village-deities. In Mysore and the Tamil country, on the other hand, a member of a non-Brahmin caste is normally priest at the temple of a village-deity.

Throughout peninsular India, excluding Kēraḷa, Māri is a common village-deity. She presides over epidemic diseases such as plague, smallpox, and cholera, which usually occur in summer. The propitiation of Māri with offerings and festival takes place in summer, and also whenever plague or cholera or smallpox breaks out.

Village-deities in peninsular India are frequently females. This is specially true of the area east of the Western Ghats. Ellamma (literally 'boundary-mother') is a familiar deity in Telugu and Tamil villages. Kāḷi is another familiar goddess.

All village-deities are not, however, goddesses: there are also gods. Ayyanār, for instance, is a very popular god in Tamil villages and he keeps watch on the village when the villagers are asleep. Bīrēdēvaru is a popular god in Kannaḍa villages.

All over peninsular India, with the exception of the Malayāḷam-speaking areas, bull buffaloes are favourite animals for sacrifice to village-deities. In the Malayāḷam-speaking areas, however, the favourite animals for sacrifice are the pig, goat, sheep, and fowl. The south-western part of Coorg shares numerous cultural forms with Malabar, and there the bull buffalo is not sacrificed to village-deities. In the eastern and northern parts, however, buffaloes are sacrificed to village-deities, especially Māri. But

[1] I say 'usually' and not 'invariably' because sometimes there are non-Brahmin priests at the shrines of Sanskritic deities. For instance, in many temples dedicated to Shiva in one or other of his numerous forms there are Liṅgāyaṭ priests.

1:Srinivas E-5 (1940-42)1952 AW5 Coorg AW5

other Coorgs he is a vegetarian and teetotaller. People respect him greatly for his piety. He is frequently contrasted with other oracles, who, in their day-to-day lives, are neither conspicuously pious nor virtuous.

Poleyas may not enter the temple of Bhadrakāḷi. Images and representations of their deities are placed on an improvised platform outside the temple compound. The Poleya oracles dance before this platform.

Some of the duties performed by the Poleyas, however, require them to exercise power over people belonging to the higher castes, and this has the effect of compensating them for the low position they normally occupy in the caste structure. The Poleya oracles who dance before their deities have the power to spot any stranger trying to enter the temple. They also exorcise evil spirits from possessed persons who may frequently belong to a high caste.

Votive animals are brought on the tenth day to Bhadrakāḷi mostly by the members of the high castes. A few of these are allotted to the Poleya deities by the oracle of Bhadrakāḷi. While half of each decapitated animal before Bhadrakāḷi is shared by *okkas* belonging to the high castes in Kuklūr, the animals decapitated before Poleya deities are not so shared. The Poleyas share among themselves the animals decapitated before their deities. The allotment of some of the animals brought by members of the high castes to the Poleya deities constitutes a gift by the high castes to Poleyas. This might be regarded as a return gift for the twenty-five chickens which were 'given' on the ninth day by the Poleyas to the high-caste people.

The position of the Poleyas varies from festival to festival. In some festivals the exclusion aspect seems to be stressed to the neglect of other aspects, whereas in certain others, along with the exclusion-aspect, the solidarity-aspect and the compensation-aspect are all stressed, but with the first mentioned predominating over the others.

VIII

The village is a social unit of considerable strength, and this is in spite of the fact that caste-ties are always tending to stretch beyond the village (and even *nāḍ*). A village is a multi-caste association and the unity of the village always demands that caste-ties

3:Iyer E-5 (no date) 1948 AW5 Coorg AW5

seedlings together, keeping a regular interval of six inches. Before the completion of the largest field, an open space of about ten feet wide is left throughout the whole length. This is the Coorg race-ground, offering good sport which greatly enlivens their monotonous work. From the men engaged in work, fifteen are selected for the race on 100 butties of land. Wearing a pair of short drawers they are eager for the run for which their strong legs qualify them. The signal is given and away they scramble, plunge, and stagger in deep mud, roars of laughter greeting the unfortunate persons who sink in. Having reached the opposite bank, they return in the same way struggling to the winning post. Four or five only win the race. The first-comer is rewarded with a piece of cloth, the second with a bunch of plantains, the third with a jack-fruit, the fourth with a bunch of oranges, and the fifth with parched rice. When all the fields are planted, a feast is given by the landlord.

As a protection against the evil eye, some half-burnt bamboos about six feet long are erected in a line through the middle of the fields. It is now the farmer's business to regulate the water supply of each field, and to fill up the holes made by crabs in the embankments. The weeding is then attended to and failures replanted. At the end of October, when the ears of corn are fully out, small huts on high posts are erected, one for every hundred buttes, for the watchman who guards the crop against wild animals and at times fires a gun to scare them away. In November and December the paddy ripens, and the feast of the first fruits or Huttari is celebrated, after which the paddy may be reaped. The water is drained off the fields. The paddy is then cut down with a sickle close to the ground and then spread out to dry. After six or eight days it is bound into sheaves, carried home, and stacked in a heap, the ears turned inside. In January or February, chiefly in moonlit nights, the sheaves are taken to the threshing floor, spread round a stone pillar in the middle, and trod out by bullocks and buffaloes, when the paddy is winnowed. The best quality is reserved for seed and the rest stored for consumption or sale.

Cardamom Cultivation

The cultivation of cardamoms was formerly second in importance to that of rice, and a fine cardamom jungle at an elevation of 3,000 to 5,000 feet was regarded as a great asset. Cardamom grows in evergreen jungle at an elevation of 3,000 to 5,000 feet, but it requires subdued light for its growth. This is obtained by the felling of trees which let in light. February or March is the time for this, and the shaking of the ground causes the young plants to shoot up in three months. The capsules appear in the third year, and ripen in September or October, when the crop is gathered. A good crop is gathered for seven years, when the felling of another big

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

224 554 588 C. Cariappah, the Subadar of the taluq, having shot a tiger. Under a screen, on a wedding chair, his face towards the carcass sat the hero of the day, clothed in Coorg warrior costume and covered with flower wreaths and gold ornaments. Behind him stood his armour-bearers, in front the sacred house lamp on a heap of rice, poured into a brass dish. First each [431] [574] member of his house, men, women and children, then all his friends, one by one, stepped up to the bridegroom; strewed a handful of rice from the brass dish over his head, gave him from a brass vessel a sip of milk to drink and in making obeisance, dropped a silver coin into his lap. This money is given with a view to defray the impending expenditure on a sumptuous dinner, given to the whole company. A Coorg dance round the tiger concludes the tamásh and the night wears away with singing and feasting.

*136 [654] Government has now fixed a reward of Rupees five for the destruction of a tiger and Rupees three for that of a cheeta; but the unmutilated skin with the claws has to be delivered to the Sirkar. The height of the tiger varies from 3 to 4 and his length from 6 to 7 feet to which 3 feet may be added for the length of the tail. His weight is from 250 to 400 lbs.

[301] [789] [825] Sometimes one sees children with the ornament of 2 tiger's claws, joined together by silver or gold and suspended round the neck. This charm is supposed to keep off the evil eye. The age of a tiger is said to be ascertained by the number of lobes of his liver, one lobe being added every year!

The cheeta (*Can.* kiruba) or panther is more common than the tiger. It is a very destructive beast to smaller domestic animals. In his depredations he is a coward, chiefly attacking his prey by night and fleeing man, if unmolested. [554] Upon the destruction of a cheeta by a Coorg, the same festivities, as on the tiger hunt, take place, but there is less honour to the sportsman. The skin of the cheeta is spotted with

1 [Errata: this should read "claws". See Corrigenda sheet, Cat. 116, P. 473 -- Analyst]

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

*136 The fact is, that, as the jackal eats only the ripest berries, the beans are naturally of a good quality.

The mungoose or Ichneumon Múngos (Viverra mungo *Can.* kíra)—is frequently found on the bánes, where it is seen running from one copse to another. Its elongated, slender body with pearly, ash-grey fur and thick long tail, its pointed head and bright eyes and its rapid movements give it a pretty appearance, and, but for its wanton depredations amongst the poultry, it might become a useful pet, as [824] it destroys rats and snakes. The natives say that after its struggle with a poisonous snake, it takes recourse to the Nágadále (Ruta, Rue) the leaves of which act as an antidote.

Black bears (*Can.* karadi) are found in Marenád on the Pushpagiri, Kóte-betta and Kálur-betta, where there are colonies of beehives, for Master Bruin is very fond of honey. [262] His flesh is not eaten, but pieces of his skin are attached to [789] the necks of horses and cows, to keep off the evil eye. [231]

On the wooded banks of the Hatti and Shóran-hole and elsewhere there are small colonies of a species of otter-hound, which the natives call Nírunái or water-dog (Lutra Nair Cuv.) The animal is deep reddish brown on the back, lightest on the sides and below, lives in artificial burrows and subsists on fish, which it catches with great skill. It is eaten by the Yerawas.

Mice and *rats* there are more of in Coorg, than the farmer and house-owner would wish. The musk-rat betrays itself by its piercing shriek, but has a safeguard in its strong smell against its pursuing enemies. Great havoc has been done on some coffee plantations by the bamboo-rat (Golunda Ellioti) which is gregarious and for want of jungle-food often attacks in great numbers the coffee shrub, selecting the tender and succulent shoots and, to get at them, cutting off the primaries near the stem. Most wary of traps of any kind, this destructive animal is difficult to deal with. The field-rat (*Can.*

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

the venom ducts and by the force of the actual bite a drop of the venom is injected through the channel of the fangs into the tiny wound and in a few minutes the whole system of the victim is poisoned and inevitable death ensues. Varieties of the cobra with hood and mark are the Pillandi-murga and the kád-murga, the former is greyish white and 1 to 1¼ foot long, the latter is dark brown; their bite is less poisonous. The Kare-náda (black snake) with white marks about the throat, is 8 or 10 feet long and very rapid in its movements. It is found in dense forests and is sometimes washed down by the mountain torrents. Its bite causes death within half an hour. The late Rajah is said to have ascertained the power of the venom by experimenting upon sheep and buffaloes. The bite of the Patte-kolaka produces festering sores over the body; the Coorgs string the bones of this snake together and wear them as a charm against sores or swelling of the glands. There are three kinds of Cardamom-snakes: the green, the black and the grey Mandoli or Kummepámbu or Kurudu-mandoli which during the day are in a state of torpor, but active at night. On this account the natives term them "blind snakes"; they are often trodden upon by the cardamom cultivators, but a certain charm is said to render the poison innocuous. The kádu-bale and kére-bale muri or the jungle and tank Bracelet-snakes have white rings round their dark body, which become visible when the snakes are irritated. They are from 4 to 6 feet in length. The Pachi-balli-murga is dangerous to cattle whilst grazing.

Amongst the innocuous snakes the largest is the Perampámbu (big snake) or Rock-snake, a kind of Boa constrictor, which grows to a length of 12 to 15 feet and has in thickness the girth of a man's thigh. It even devours spotted deer and, after the monsoon, is often shot by Coorgs in the cardamom jungles. Next in size is the Black-tank or Rat-snake

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

243 461 526 legs well qualify them. The sign is given and away they scramble and plunge and stagger in the deep mud and roars of laughter greet the unfortunate wight who tumbles into the mud. Having reached the opposite bank, they return the same way, and hard is their struggle close to the winning post. The first comer is rewarded with a piece of cloth, the second with a bunch of plantains, the third with a jack-fruit, the fourth with a basket of oranges and the fifth with parched rice. [594] When all the fields are planted, a feast for the people is given by the landlord.

243 [989] As a protection against the evil eye, some half burnt bamboos about 6 feet high are erected in a line throughout the middle of the fields. It is now the farmer's business, to regulate the water supply of each field and to fill up holes made by crabs in the embankments. Also the weeding is attended to and any failures are replanted. At the end of October, [343] when the ears of the grain are fully out, huts on high posts are erected, one for every 100 butties, for the watchman who guards the crop against wild beasts and occasionally fires off a gun. In November or December the paddy gets ripe and the feast of first fruits or "Huttari" is celebrated, after which the paddy may be reaped. The water is drained off the fields, the paddy cut down with sickles close to the ground and spread out to dry; after 5 or 6 days it is bound up into sheaves and carried home and stacked in a heap, the ears turned inside. In January or February, [435] chiefly in moonlight nights, the sheaves are taken down to the threshing floor, spread round a stone pillar, fixed in the middle, and trodden out by bullocks and buffaloes, when the paddy is winnowed, the best quality reserved for seed and the rest stored up in the granary, already described, for home consumption and for sale, the price varying from 2 to 4 Rs. a butty. [179] A threshing machine, lately introduced by Lieut. Mackenzie, excited the astonishment and admiration of the

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

when the turn came to a certain house, the devoted victim made his escape into the jungle. The villagers, after an unsuccessful search, returned to the temple and said to the pújári: "Kalak-ádu" which has a double meaning viz. "Kalake," next year—"ádu," we will give, or "ádu", a goat: and thenceforth only scape-goats were offered. The devotees fast during the day. The he-goat is killed in the afternoon, the blood sprinkled upon a stone, and the flesh eaten. At night the Panikas dressed in red and white striped cotton cloths and their faces covered with metal or bark masks perform their demoniacal dances.

In Mercara-táluq in Ippanivolavádi and in Kádakéri in Hálerinád the villagers sacrifice a kóna or male-buffalo instead of a man. Tied to a tree in a gloomy grove near the temple, the beast is killed by a Méda who cuts off its head with a large knife, but no Coorgs are present at the time. The blood is spilled on a stone under a tree and the flesh eaten by the Médas.

In connection with this sacrifice there are peculiar dances performed by the Coorgs around the temple: the *Kombáta* or *horn-dance*, each man wearing the horns of a spotted deer or stag on his head; the *Piliáta* or *peacocks'-feather-dance*, the performers being ornamented with peacocks' feathers, and the *Chauriáta* or *yák-tail-dance*, during which the dancers, keeping time, swing yák tails. These ornaments belong to the temple, where they are kept.

In some cases where a particular curse is said by the Kanya to rest upon a house, stable or field, which can only be removed by an extraordinary sacrifice, the ceremony performed seems to be another relic of human sacrifices. The Kanya sends for some of his fraternity, the Panikas or Bannas, and they set to work. A pit is dug in the middle room of the house, or in the yard, or the stable, or the field, as the occasion may require. Into this one of the magicians des-

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

782 cends. He sits down in Hindu fashion, muttering mantras.
789 Pieces of wood are laid across the pit, and covered with earth
791 a foot or two deep. Upon this platform a fire of jack-wood
178 is kindled, into which butter, sugar, different kinds of grain, etc. are thrown. This sacrifice continues all night, the Panika sacrificer above, and his immured colleague below, repeating their incantations all the while. In the morning the pit is opened, and the man returns to the light of day. These sacrifices are called *Máranada bali* or *death-atonements*. They cost from 10 to 15 Rupees. Instead of a human being, a cock is sometimes shut up in the pit and killed afterwards.

789 In cases of sore afflictions befalling a whole gráma or nád
782 such as small-pox, cholera or cattle-disease, the ryots combine
753 to appease the wrath of *Mári-amma* by collecting contributions of pigs, fowls, rice, cocoanuts, bread, and plantains from the different houses, and depositing them at the Mandu; whence they are carried in a procession with tomtoms. In one basket there is some rice and the members of each house on coming out bring a little rice in the hand and, waving it round the head, throw it into the basket with the belief that the dreaded evil will depart with the rice. At last the offerings are put down on the nád boundary, the animals are killed, their blood is offered on a stone, the rice and basket are left, and the rest of the provisions consumed by the persons composing the procession. The people of the adjoining grámas or náds repeat the same ceremony and thus the epidemic is supposed to be banished from the country. In still greater calamities a flock of sheep is driven from nád to nád and at last expelled from the country.

788 **e. Pilgrimages of the Coorgs within and outside**
783 **their own country.**

Besides the annual *Tale-Káveri festival* in October and the *Kuttadamma-játre* in April there is a large concourse of people in February during *Sivarátri* at *Herumálu* in Kiggat-

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AWS Coorg AWS

and tear whatever objects first met his fury, until he was satiated with blood and his paroxysm subsided. Dr. Ingledew, who was sent early in 1809 by Mr. Cole, the Resident in Mysore, to attend upon the Rájah, heard some vague rumours of several thousand people having been destroyed "after the late disturbances," that is, the conspiracy above related. Vírarájendra had long to wait for an answer from the Governor General to his petition of October 1807. He had requested, that the concurrence of the Governor General with his settlement of the succession might be registered in the books of the Supreme Government and a copy sent him of the registry, which he would wear about his body as an amulet.

During the year 1808 fits of madness seized the unfortunate Rájah. They rarely passed without some victims of his incontrollable fury, falling by his bullet or under the knives of his African executioners. Some time in October or November 1808 Vírarája was seized with forebodings of his own death and terrible fears for the safety of his daughters in case of his decease before the Governor General had concurred in his plan of securing to Dévammáji the throne of Coorg, and before his sanction insured her succession and, it might be, the preservation of her life. His melancholy warned him of his approaching death. And if he was carried off on a sudden, who would be the friend and guardian of his daughter? Appáji, his proud brother, who had never loved him, and who had long kept sullenly at a distance, or even the dull mean-spirited Lingarája might covet the wealth and power of the throne, murder the helpless children and seize the great prize. But no! He was yet alive and omnipotent in Coorg, he could yet defend his beloved Dévammáji and her sisters. The executioners are called. A party is despatched to Appagalla, a second party to Háleri, to bring the heads of the brothers, Appáji and Lingarája. They prostrate themselves and depart

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AWS Coorg AWS

632 Government *English School* is a temporary building near the
369 Bangalow and a more commodious and substantial School-
house should be erected. Of the four *tanks* belonging to the
632 town, Gauri-kere contains the purest water. It is at the
312 head of the Petta and was excavated by the orders of Dodda-
[789] Vírájender, the founder of Vírájpet. At the expense of Pál-
[783] pare Rudaya it was repaired some years ago, but people being
allowed to wash and bathe in the tank, the wholesomeness of
the water must be greatly impaired, and Gauri-idol[1] which is
annually thrown into it at the Gauri-feast will not restore
its purity! Good drinking water, but in a small quantity, is
obtained from an enclosed spring at the foot of the Bangalow
632 hill, close to the paddy fields. The site of Vírájpet being very
245 rocky, the industry of the people in economising every foot
of cultivable land is very remarkable, but the destruction of so
many coffee and orange trees by the Borer has considerably
marred the once luxuriant vegetation in and around Vírájpet.
In the principal street there are a few straggling cocoanut
trees, but the climate is not congenial to a fertile growth.

635 Communication with the eastern portion of the taluq and
491 with Mysore is maintained by two bandy roads, one through
Cólepet, Anandapur and Siddápur, the other towards Bittan-
gala and Hattúr.

635 ***Kiggatnád-taluq*** extends with its four Náds over the
[634] whole of south-eastern Coorg and covers an area of 400 square
[131] miles with 63 villages and the rising town Ponappet. The
taluq contains 17,650 inhabitants, of whom 5,480 are Coorgs,
[162] 5,709 other Hindus and 5,818 Jungle people, such as
[563] Kurnbas and Yeravas; of the rest 417 are Mussulmans and
223 Amma-Codagas. Upon the whole the people of this
taluq may be said to be in easy circumstances, as they are
well provided with the necessaries of life. With the excep-
[554] tion of the large and influential house of the late Devún
Chepudira Ponnappa but little disparity in point of wealth

[1] [Errata: This should read "and the Gauri-idol" see Corrigenda, Cat. 116, p. 479 -- Analyst]